

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1 1. A digital image selection method, comprising:
2 obtaining a first digital image of a first side of a physical object;
3 obtaining a second digital image of a second side of the physical object;
4 examining the first digital image to determine if it is substantially blank;
5 sending the second digital image for processing if the first digital image is
6 substantially blank; and
7 sending the first digital image for processing if the first digital image is
8 not substantially blank.

1 2. The method of Claim 1, wherein the physical object is a first of an
2 ordered set of physical objects, the method further comprising:
3 if the first digital image is not substantially blank, obtaining a first set of
4 digital images, each digital image of the first set being a digital image of a first
5 side of a physical object of the ordered set of physical objects and, sending the
6 first set of digital images for processing; and
7 if the first digital image is substantially blank, obtaining a second set of
8 digital images, each digital image of the second set being a digital image of a
9 second side of a physical object of the ordered set of physical objects, and
10 sending the second set of digital images for processing.

1 3. The method of Claim 1, further comprising examining the second
2 digital image to determine if it is substantially blank and sending the second
3 digital image for processing if the second digital image is not substantially blank.

1 4. The method of Claim 1, wherein the step of examining is
2 performed before the step of obtaining the second digital image and the step of
3 obtaining the second digital image is performed only if the first digital image is
4 substantially blank.

1 5. The method of Claim 1, further comprising discarding the first
2 digital image if it is substantially blank.

1 6. The method of Claim 1, wherein the steps of obtaining the first
2 and second digital images comprise:
3 scanning the first side of the physical object to generate the first digital
4 image; and
5 scanning the second side of the physical object to generate the second
6 digital image.

1 7. The method of Claim 1, wherein:
2 sending the second digital image for processing comprises sending the
3 second digital image to be printed if the first digital image is substantially blank;
4 and
5 sending the first digital image for processing comprises sending the first
6 digital image to be printed if the first digital image is not substantially blank.

1 8. The method of Claim 1, wherein:
2 sending the second digital image for processing comprises sending the
3 second digital image to be incorporated in a facsimile transmission if the first
4 digital image is substantially blank; and
5 sending the first digital image for processing comprises sending the first
6 digital image to be incorporated in a facsimile transmission if the first digital
7 image is not substantially blank.

1 9. The method of Claim 1, wherein:
2 sending the second digital image for processing comprises sending the
3 second digital image to be incorporated in an electronic mail message if the first
4 digital image is substantially blank; and
5 sending the first digital image for processing comprises sending the first
6 digital image to be incorporated in an electronic mail message if the first digital
7 image is not substantially blank.

1 10. The method of Claim 1, wherein:
2 sending the second digital image for processing comprises sending the
3 second digital image to be archived if the first digital image is substantially
4 blank; and
5 sending the first digital image for processing comprises sending the first
6 digital image to be archived if the first digital image is not substantially blank.

1 11. A digital image selection method, comprising:
2 obtaining a first set of ordered digital images, each digital image of the
3 first set being a digital image of a first side of a physical object, the physical
4 object being one of an ordered set of physical objects;
5 obtaining a second set of ordered digital images, each digital image of the
6 second set being a digital image of a second side of a physical object, the
7 physical object being one of the ordered set of physical objects;
8 examining the first set of digital images to determine if the first set is
9 substantially blank;
10 sending the second set of digital images for processing if the first set of
11 digital images is substantially blank; and
12 sending the first set of digital images for processing if the first set of
13 digital images is not substantially blank.

1 12. The method of Claim 11, further comprising examining the second
2 set of digital images to determine if the second set is substantially blank and
3 sending the second set of digital images for processing if the second set of
4 digital images is not substantially blank.

1 13. The method of Claim 11, further comprising reversing an order of
2 the second set of digital images if the first set of digital images is substantially
3 blank.

1 14. The method of Claim 11, further comprising discarding the first set
2 of digital images if it is substantially blank.

1 15. The method of Claim 11, wherein the steps of obtaining the first
2 and second sets of digital images comprise:
3 scanning the first side of each physical object to generate the first set of
4 digital images; and
5 scanning the second side of each physical object to generate the second
6 set of digital images.

1 16. The method of Claim 11, wherein:
2 sending the second set of digital images for processing comprises sending
3 the second set of digital images to be printed if the first set of digital images is
4 substantially blank; and
5 sending the first set of digital images for processing comprises sending
6 the first set of digital images to be printed if the first set of digital images is not
7 substantially blank.

1 17. The method of Claim 11, wherein:
2 sending the second set of digital images for processing comprises sending
3 the second set of digital images to be incorporated in a facsimile transmission if
4 the first set of digital images is substantially blank; and
5 sending the first set of digital images for processing comprises sending
6 the first set of digital images to be incorporated in a facsimile transmission if the
7 first set of digital images is not substantially blank.

1 18. The method of Claim 11, wherein:
2 sending the second set of digital images for processing comprises sending
3 the second set of digital images to be incorporated in an electronic mail message
4 if the first set of digital images is substantially blank; and
5 sending the first set of digital images for processing comprises sending
6 the first set of digital images to be incorporated in an electronic mail message if
7 the first set of digital images is not substantially blank.

1 19. The method of Claim 11, wherein:
2 sending the second set of digital images for processing comprises sending
3 the second set of digital images to be archived if the first set of digital images is
4 substantially blank; and
5 sending the first set of digital images for processing comprises sending
6 the first set of digital images to be archived if the first set of digital images is
7 not substantially blank.

1 20. A computer readable medium having instructions for:
2 obtaining a first digital image of a first side of a physical object;
3 obtaining a second digital image of a second side of the physical object;
4 examining the first digital image to determine if it is substantially blank;
5 sending the second digital image for processing if the first digital image is
6 substantially blank; and
7 sending the first digital image for processing if the first digital image is
8 not substantially blank.

1 21. The medium of Claim 20, wherein the physical object is a first of
2 an ordered set of physical objects, the medium having further instructions for:
3 if the first digital image is not substantially blank, obtaining a first set of
4 digital images, each digital image of the first set being a digital image of a first
5 side of a physical object of the ordered set of physical objects and, sending the
6 first set of digital images for processing; and
7 if the first digital image is substantially blank, obtaining a second set of
8 digital images, each digital image of the second set being a digital image of a
9 second side of a physical object of the ordered set of physical objects, and
10 sending the second set of digital images for processing.

1 22. The medium of Claim 20, having further instructions for examining
2 the second digital image to determine if it is substantially blank and sending the
3 second digital image for processing if the second digital image is not
4 substantially blank.

1 23. The medium of Claim 20, wherein the instructions obtaining the
2 second digital image include instructions for obtaining the second digital image
3 only if the first digital image is substantially blank.

1 24. The medium of Claim 20, having further instructions for discarding
2 the first digital image if it is substantially blank.

1 25. The medium of Claim 20, wherein the instructions for obtaining the
2 first and second digital images include instructions for:
3 scanning the first side of the physical object to generate the first digital
4 image; and
5 scanning the second side of the digital object to generate the second
6 digital image.

1 26. The medium of Claim 20, wherein the instructions for:
2 sending the second digital image for processing include instructions for
3 sending the second digital image to be printed if the first digital image is
4 substantially blank; and
5 sending the first digital image for processing include instructions for
6 sending the first digital image to be printed if the first digital image is not
7 substantially blank.

1 27. The medium of Claim 20, wherein the instructions for:
2 sending the second digital image for processing include instructions for
3 sending the second digital image to be incorporated in a facsimile transmission if
4 the first digital image is substantially blank; and
5 sending the first digital image for processing include instructions for
6 sending the first digital image to be incorporated in a facsimile transmission if
7 the first digital image is not substantially blank.

1 28. The medium of Claim 20, wherein the instructions for:
2 sending the second digital image for processing include instructions for
3 sending the second digital image to be incorporated in an electronic mail
4 message if the first digital image is substantially blank; and
5 sending the first digital image for processing include instructions for
6 sending the first digital image to be incorporated in an electronic mail message if
7 the first digital image is not substantially blank.

1 29. The medium of Claim 20, wherein the instructions for:
2 sending the second digital image for processing include instructions for
3 sending the second digital image to be archived if the first digital image is
4 substantially blank; and
5 sending the first digital image for processing include instructions for
6 sending the first digital image to be archived if the first digital image is not
7 substantially blank.

1 30. A computer readable medium having instructions for:
2 obtaining a first set of ordered digital images, each digital image of the
3 first set being a digital image of a first side of a physical object, the physical
4 object being one of an ordered set of physical objects;
5 obtaining a second set of ordered digital images, each digital image of the
6 second set being a digital image of a second side of a physical object, the
7 physical object being one of the ordered set of physical objects;
8 examining the first set of digital images to determine if the first set is
9 substantially blank;
10 sending the second set of digital images for processing if the first set of
11 digital images is substantially blank; and
12 sending the first set of digital images for processing if the first set of
13 digital images is not substantially blank.

1 31. The medium of Claim 30, having further instructions for examining
2 the second set of digital images to determine if the second set is substantially

1 blank and sending the second set of digital images for processing if the second
2 set of digital images is not substantially blank.

1 32. The medium of Claim 30, having further instructions for reversing
2 an order of the second set of digital images if the first set of digital images is
3 substantially blank.

1 33. The medium of Claim 30, having further instructions for discarding
2 the first set of digital images if it is substantially blank.

1 34. The medium of Claim 30, wherein the instructions for obtaining the
2 first and second sets of digital images include instructions for:
3 scanning the first side of each physical object to generate the first set of
4 digital images; and
5 scanning the second side of each physical object to generate the second
6 set of digital images.

1 35. The medium of Claim 30, wherein the instructions for:
2 sending the second set of digital images for processing include
3 instructions for sending the second set of digital images to be printed if the first
4 set of digital images is substantially blank; and
5 sending the first set of digital images for processing include instructions
6 for sending the first set of digital images to be printed if the first set of digital
7 images is not substantially blank.

1 36. The medium of Claim 30, wherein the instructions for:
2 sending the second set of digital images for processing include
3 instructions for sending the second set of digital images to be incorporated in a
4 facsimile transmission if the first set of digital images is substantially blank; and
5 sending the first set of digital images for processing include instructions
6 for sending the first set of digital images to be incorporated in a facsimile
7 transmission if the first set of digital images is not substantially blank.

1 37. The medium of Claim 30, wherein the instructions for:
2 sending the second set of digital images for processing include
3 instructions for sending the second set of digital images to be incorporated in an
4 electronic mail message if the first set of digital images is substantially blank;
5 and
6 sending the first set of digital images for processing include instructions
7 for sending the first set of digital images to be incorporated in an electronic mail
8 message if the first set of digital images is not substantially blank.

1 38. The medium of Claim 30, wherein the instructions for:
2 sending the second set of digital images for processing include
3 instructions for sending the second set of digital images to be archived if the
4 first set of digital images is substantially blank; and
5 sending the first set of digital images for processing include instructions
6 for sending the first set of digital images to be archived if the first set of digital
7 images is not substantially blank.

1 39. A system for digital image selection, comprising:
2 an image manager operable to obtain a first digital image of a first side of
3 a physical object and a second digital image of a second side of the physical
4 object;
5 a content module operable to examine the first digital image to determine
6 if it is substantially blank; and
7 wherein the image manager is further operable to send the second digital
8 image for processing if the first digital image is substantially blank and to send
9 the first digital image for processing if the first digital image is not substantially
10 blank.

1 40. The system of Claim 39, wherein the physical object is a first of an
2 ordered set of physical objects and wherein the image manager is further
3 operable to:
4 if the first digital image is not substantially blank, obtain a first set of
5 digital images, each digital image of the first set being a digital image of a first

1 side of a physical object of the ordered set of physical objects, and send the first
2 set of digital images for processing; and
3 if the first digital image is substantially blank, obtain a second set of
4 digital images, each digital image of the second set being a digital image of a
5 second side of a physical object of the ordered set of physical objects, and send
6 the second set of digital images for processing.

1 41. The system of Claim 39, wherein the content module is further
2 operable to examine the second digital image to determine if it is substantially
3 blank and the image manager is further operable to send the second digital
4 image for processing if the second digital image is not substantially blank.

1 42. A system for digital image selection, comprising:
2 an image manager operable to obtain:
3 a first set of ordered digital images, each digital image of
4 the first set being a digital image of a first side of a physical object,
5 the physical object being one of an ordered set of physical objects;
6 a second set of ordered digital images, each digital image of
7 the second set being a digital image of a second side of a physical
8 object, the physical object being one of the ordered set of physical
9 objects;
10 a content module operable to examine the first set of digital images to
11 determine if the first set is substantially blank; and
12 wherein the image manager is further operable to:
13 send the second set of digital images for processing if the
14 first set of digital images is substantially blank; and
15 send the first set of digital images for processing if the first
16 set of digital images is not substantially blank.

1 43. The system of Claim 42, wherein the content module is further
2 operable to examine the second set of digital images to determine if the second
3 set is substantially blank and wherein the image manager is further operable to

1 send the second set of digital images for processing if the second set of digital
2 images is not substantially blank.

1 44. The system of Claim 42, further comprising a reorder module
2 operable to reverse an order of the second set of digital images if the first set of
3 digital images is substantially blank.

1 45. A digital image production system, comprising
2 a scan engine operable to generate a first digital image of a first side of a
3 physical object and a second digital image of a second side of the physical
4 object;
5 a production engine operable to process the first and the second digital
6 images;
7 digital image selector operable to:
8 examine the first digital image to determine if it is
9 substantially blank;
10 send the second digital image to the production engine if the
11 first digital image is substantially blank; and
12 send the first digital image to the production engine if the
13 first digital image is not substantially blank.

1 46. The system of Claim 45, wherein the production engine is an
2 electronic mail engine.

1 47. The system of Claim 45, wherein the production engine is a print
2 engine.

1 48. The system of Claim 45, wherein the production engine is a
2 facsimile engine.

1 49. The system of Claim 45, wherein the scan engine, the production
2 engine, and the digital image selector are all integral parts of a single peripheral
3 device.

1 50. A system for digital image selection, comprising:
2 a means for obtaining a first digital image of a first side of a physical
3 object and a second digital image of a second side of the physical object;
4 a means for examining the first digital image to determine if it is
5 substantially blank; and
6 a means for sending the second digital image for processing if the first
7 digital image is substantially blank; and
8 a means for sending the first digital image for processing if the first digital
9 image is not substantially blank.